ART BUCHWALD

The Truth About Guns

WASHINGTON — We hold these truths to be self-evident:

Most people who own a gun would not blow up a building. But most people who would blow up a building own a gun.

The reason these people would blow up buildings is that they are afraid someone is going to take their guns away from them.

Buchwald

If they could call attention to their fears in some other way, they would do so.

But apparently nobody will listen to them unless they blow up a building. So now everyone knows how these people feel about being disarmed.

These unhappy "soldiers of fortune" have many friends in Congress who have vowed to see that assault weapons will be available to every American to protect himself against those who would try and confiscate his weapons — thus leaving him naked when he makes his last stand against those who would put all the "patriots" into concentration camps.

□

While the National Rifle Association does not support people who blow up buildings, they have to defend those who want to purchase any firearm on the open market.

Their gospel remains: Guns don't kill people, people kill people.

Actually, that's not completely correct. Guns don't kill people, bombs kill people.

Wait, there's more:

Guns don't kill people, bombs kill people, but they're owned by people who need weapons to keep them free.

The NRA still claims that just because crazies blow up buildings is no reason to penalize law-abiding citizens who want to buy AK-47s for squirrel shooting.

□

If your congressman doesn't buy this, the NRA will not give him any money for his re-election and the organization will ensure that he loses his seat. This is to teach other anti-gun legislators a lesson.

People who blow up buildings do not believe that the NRA is doing enough to let Americans hold on to their weapons.

They prefer to send a message to Washington in a large truck filled with fertilizer and fuel oil.

If the country can't guarantee a well-armed militia to defend itself against the infidels from abroad and from within, then by golly they'll do something about it themselves.

□

This is not only a question of defending the country. It's a love affair. People who have assault weapons are obsessed with them. They wear them on their hips, they carry them in their cars, they sleep with them under their pillows, and they kiss them in drive-in movies.

What to do to placate these people?

The answer is not to confiscate these weapons, or refuse to sell them in the first place (the NRA would never stand for it), but to ban the sale of fertilizer. That will be our final compromise with bombers.

Let them own all the guns they want to, but they mustn't blow up buildings.

As Gordon Liddy would probably say, "Ask not for whom the bombs explode — they explode for thee."

Ingmar Bergman and His Unfinished Business

By Alan Riding
New York Times Service

STOCKHOLM — Even for the short flight to Stockholm from his home on the island of Faro, Ingmar Bergman confesses to swallowing tranquilizers.

So it is hardly surprising that he will not be in New York for the four-month festival that opens May 5 and celebrates his extraordinary life's work as a movie, television and stage director and as a writer.

"I hate to travel," he said. "I don't go anywhere."

Of course, as might be expected of the enigmatic Swedish artist, it is not quite that simple.

Traveling also disturbs the ordered and introspective life he now leads. Even the "demons" he tried to exorcise in many films seem under control. "They know they can reach me in the early morning and, if I stay in bed, they invade me from all sides," he said with a laugh. "But I cheat them because I get up. And they hate fresh air. I walk quickly in all sorts of weather — and they hate that."

Now, at 76, he directs two plays a year at the Royal Dramatic Theater in Stockholm. At his house on Faro in the Baltic Sea, he spends mornings writing novels, plays and television scripts. But since he stopped making movies in 1983, he has purposely turned away from his fame.

He seems relieved to be out of the limelight. His last film, "Fanny and Alexander," took seven months to shoot and drained him of the will to make more. Above all, he wanted time to deal with the unfinished business of his life without the disruptions. "I thought, 'Now it's over,' " he said. "It was a good feeling. And I decided as a principle not to give any more interviews."

On this point, however, he relented, and one recent afternoon found himself looking unhappily at a tape recorder. His thinning hair is now white; his hands trembled a little. But, even with a stubbly goatee, his sad, elongated face looked familiar.

"I am very shy with people I don't know," he said.But he had also made a deal with himself. For what he described softly as "the last interview" of his life, he said, "I will try to be absolutely honest."

Even for a man who has revealed so much of himself in his films and, more recently, in his 1987 memoir, "The Magic Lantern," it was not always easy. At times, he fell silent or sighed deeply. At others, he leaned backward anxiously, lowered his head or covered his face with his hand. Then, suddenly, he would break the tension with laughter, cheerfully describing himself as a "pedant" and a "nut case."

"Of course I am autobiographical," he said after one long pause. "I am autobiographical in the way a dream transforms experience and emotions all the time." But it was always like that. Since childhood, he said, it was always a matter of playing games with fantasy and reality — and it still is.

"The doors between the old man today and the child are still open, wide open," Bergman said. "I can stroll through my grandmother's house, and know exactly where the pictures are, the furniture was, how it looked, the voice, the smells. I can move from my bed at night today to my childhood in less than a second. And it has exactly the same reality."

His talent, of course, has always been knowing how to translate his memories, of pain or pleasure, into art. "When I write something horrible or depressing, I am not depressed or horrified," he said.

"I am just at work. And what I am writing about is far away. I can stand in the center of a drama, hearing the people around me saying things, I can hear exactly the way they speak, and I look at them and I just write it down because what they do can be very astonishing for me. But I have already passed through it, mostly."

As a child, it was this gift that enabled him to flee into his own world.As an adult, theater, film and television became his escape routes.

By the mid-'50s, starting with "The Seventh Seal" and "Wild Strawberries," the movies that founded the Bergman legend began to flow. And, throughout the 1960s, shaped by the bitter memories of childhood, his movies mirrored his own intense and often gloomy vision of life and death.

Bengt Wanselius

A scene from Bergman's production of "The Winter's Tale" at the Royal Dramatic Theater.

Then, in the early 1970s, he turned toward another turbulent facet of his life — his five marriages and numerous passionate affairs — in such films as "Cries and Whispers" and "Scenes From a Marriage."

Yet, throughout his career, filmmaking caused him anxiety. In contrast, theater brought stability, although it was while rehearsing Strindberg's "Dance of Death" in Stockholm in 1976 that he was briefly detained on charges of tax evasion. It brought on a nervous breakdown and, although the case was dropped, he felt so betrayed by his country that he opted for exile in Munich.

When he finally returned nine years later, he went "home" to the Royal Dramatic Theater, known locally as the Dramaten, where he had first attended a play at the age of 9.

As if to anchor himself back in his country — "this country of gray boring compromises that I so love" — he chose works by Strindberg, "A Dream Play" and "Miss Julie," to be among his first productions.

But whether it is theater, film or television, it is all, as Bergman puts it, "playing games." In the end he said, what counts is the audience: "One task is to make people laugh and be happy and forget themselves. But another is to show them what is unbearable and terrifying in a way that they can bear it and learn from it."

Certainly, Bergman can now face things that once haunted him. "When I was young, I was extremely scared of dying," he said. "But now I think it a very, very wise arrangement. It's like a light that is extinguished. Not very much to make a fuss about."

He remains a pessimist — how can one not be, he asked, surrounded by such "horrifying and unbearable" reality? But "if I am in a good mood, I am a pessimist in a good mood. I won't allow myself my depressions."

Old age has clearly mellowed him. Most crucially perhaps, through the books he has written in recent years, Bergman has made peace with his parents. The fiercely confessional tone of "The Magic Lantern" set the stage, and three novels about his parents followed.

"I have the feeling that I was so unfair to my parents when I was young," he said. "Now I feel very satisfied and happy that I have done this."

There was one final question: Had he become such an acute analyst of human behavior by undergoing therapy? "No, never," he said quickly. "If I didn't have my profession, I think I would be sitting in a nut house. But I have been unceasingly at work, and this has been very healthy for me. So I had no need for therapy."

WEATHER

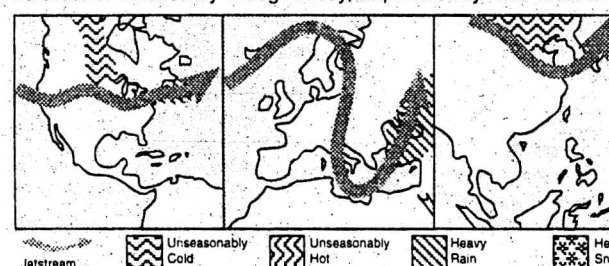
Europe

	Today High C/F	Today Low C/F	W	Tomorrow High C/F	Tomorrow Low C/F	W
Algarve	23/73	16/61	pc	24/75	16/61	pc
Amsterdam	18/64	11/52	s	18/64	13/55	s
Ankara	18/64	7/44	pc	18/64	2/35	s
Athens	20/68	12/53	s	21/70	11/52	pc
Barcelona	22/71	14/57	s	22/71	14/57	s
Belgrade	16/64	7/44	sh	17/62	6/43	pc
Berlin	17/62	6/43	s	20/68	9/48	s
Brussels	22/71	10/50	s	21/70	12/53	s
Budapest	15/59	4/39	pc	17/62	7/44	sh
Copenhagen	14/57	7/44	pc	19/66	9/48	pc
Costa Del Sol	24/75	17/62	pc	25/77	17/62	s
Dublin	17/62	12/53	sh	19/66	11/52	pc
Edinburgh	14/57	11/52	sh	16/61	11/52	pc
Florence	19/66	9/48	pc	22/71	11/52	s
Frankfurt	17/62	5/41	s	20/68	9/48	s
Geneva	21/70	11/52	pc	21/70	11/52	s
Helsinki	8/46	5/41	pc	13/55	4/39	pc
Istanbul	19/66	9/48	pc	17/62	7/44	pc
Las Palmas	24/75	18/64	pc	25/77	19/66	s
Lisbon	22/71	16/61	pc	23/73	16/61	pc
London	22/71	13/55	pc	22/71	13/55	pc
Madrid	24/75	10/50	pc	26/79	12/53	s
Milan	21/70	11/52	pc	23/73	13/55	s
Moscow	10/50	2/35	c	13/55	3/37	pc
Munich	17/62	6/43	pc	19/66	9/48	s
Nice	20/68	13/55	pc	21/70	13/55	s
Oslo	16/61	10/50	sh	21/70	10/50	pc
Palma	22/71	16/61	s	21/70	15/59	s
Paris	23/73	12/53	s	22/71	13/55	s
Prague	15/59	4/39	s	17/62	8/46	sh
Reykjavik	11/52	9/48	sh	12/53	6/43	c
Rome	19/66	9/48	pc	21/70	10/50	s
St. Petersburg	8/46	-1/31	pc	13/55	1/34	pc
Stockholm	9/48	8/46	sh	16/61	7/44	pc
Strasbourg	22/71	9/48	pc	23/73	11/52	s
Tallinn	8/46	5/41	pc	13/55	6/43	pc
Venice	19/66	11/52	pc	21/70	13/55	s
Vienna	15/59	6/43	pc	18/64	9/48	pc
Warsaw	11/52	1/34	pc	16/61	7/44	s
Zurich	19/66	8/46	pc	22/71	10/50	s

Oceania

	Today High C/F	Today Low C/F	W	Tomorrow High C/F	Tomorrow Low C/F	W
Auckland	19/66	13/55	sh	19/66	11/52	pc
Sydney	19/66	11/52	pc	21/70	13/55	t

Forecast for Wednesday through Friday, as provided by Accu-Weather.

Jetstream · Unseasonably Cold · Unseasonably Hot · Heavy Rain · Heavy Snow

North America
Chilly rain and wind will lash Maryland to Massachusetts at midweek. Showers will move from the Plains Wednesday to the Appalachians by Friday. The West will turn unsettled with showers spreading from the coast to the Rockies. Southern Florida will be hot and humid.

Europe
Dry and mild weather will hold sway over a large area from England through France and Germany to northern sections of Italy, Spain and Portugal. Southern parts of Spain, Portugal and Italy may have a few showers. Rain will wet Greece, Turkey and northeast into Russia.

Asia
There will be showers in Japan and Korea at midweek, then a trend to drier, chilly weather by Friday. Beijing will be unseasonably chilly. Shanghai will have showers followed by cool, dry weather. Even Hong Kong will have slight cooling, with some showers.

Middle East

	Today High C/F	Today Low C/F	W	Tomorrow High C/F	Tomorrow Low C/F	W
Abu Dhabi	34/93	22/71	s	36/97	23/73	s
Beirut	26/79	16/61	s	24/75	16/61	pc
Cairo	29/84	13/55	s	29/84	14/57	pc
Damascus	27/80	8/46	s	27/80	11/52	t
Jerusalem	24/75	12/53	s	24/75	13/55	pc
Luxor	42/107	21/70	s	41/106	19/66	pc
Riyadh	33/91	23/73	s	39/102	22/71	s

Africa

	Today High C/F	Today Low C/F	W	Tomorrow High C/F	Tomorrow Low C/F	W
Algiers	23/73	13/55	s	23/73	15/59	s
Cape Town	21/70	11/52	s	23/73	14/57	pc
Casablanca	23/73	15/59	pc	24/75	16/61	s
Harare	19/66	11/52	pc	27/80	11/52	pc
Lagos	30/86	25/77	c	32/89	26/79	pc
Nairobi	20/68	12/53	sh	23/73	13/55	pc
Tunis	20/68	11/52	s	23/73	11/52	s

Legend: s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice, W-Weather. **All maps, forecasts and data provided by Accu-Weather, Inc. © 1995**

Asia

	Today High C/F	Today Low C/F	W	Tomorrow High C/F	Tomorrow Low C/F	W
Bangkok	34/93	24/75	pc	34/93	26/79	pc
Beijing	21/70	4/39	pc	18/64	7/44	r
Hong Kong	28/82	23/73	pc	29/84	24/75	t
Manila	34/93	22/71	pc	34/93	24/75	pc
New Delhi	37/98	23/73	s	38/100	24/75	pc
Seoul	25/77	14/57	pc	24/75	11/52	pc
Shanghai	24/75	19/66	pc	23/73	14/57	sh
Singapore	31/88	23/73	t	32/89	24/75	pc
Taipei	29/84	20/68	t	29/84	21/70	pc
Tokyo	22/71	14/57	t	26/79	16/61	pc

Latin America

	Today High C/F	Today Low C/F	W	Tomorrow High C/F	Tomorrow Low C/F	W
Buenos Aires	23/73	13/55	pc	23/73	14/57	pc
Caracas	30/86	17/62	pc	29/84	17/62	pc
Lima	21/70	17/62	pc	22/71	17/62	pc
Mexico City	27/80	12/53	pc	29/84	11/52	pc
Rio deJaneiro	32/89	26/79	sh	31/88	24/75	pc
Santiago	21/70	11/52	s	26/79	13/55	pc

North America

	Today High C/F	Today Low C/F	W	Tomorrow High C/F	Tomorrow Low C/F	W
Anchorage	17/62	8/46	sh	18/64	8/46	pc
Atlanta	21/70	8/46	pc	23/73	14/57	pc
Boston	16/61	7/44	pc	16/61	8/46	pc
Chicago	14/57	5/41	pc	17/62	8/46	sh
Denver	19/66	5/41	sh	18/64	4/39	pc
Detroit	15/59	6/43	sh	17/62	8/46	pc
Honolulu	26/79	22/71	sh	29/84	22/71	pc
Houston	26/79	13/55	s	28/82	18/64	pc
Los Angeles	24/75	13/55	s	25/77	14/57	s
Miami	32/89	23/73	s	31/88	22/71	pc
Minneapolis	14/57	5/41	pc	17/62	8/46	sh
Montreal	17/62	0/32	pc	11/52	0/32	pc
Nassau	29/84	23/73	s	29/84	23/73	pc
New York	16/61	9/48	r	19/66	10/50	pc
Phoenix	33/91	20/68	s	34/93	19/66	s
San Fran.	18/64	11/52	s	18/64	9/48	pc
Seattle	16/61	8/46	sh	14/57	6/43	pc
Toronto	15/59	6/43	c	16/61	6/43	pc
Washington	13/55	9/48	r	22/71	11/52	pc

PEOPLE

STARS from Britain's 31 "Carry On" films unveiled a plaque to their director **Gerald Thomas**, who made the bawdy romps into international hits. A plaque to the director, who died last November, was unveiled at Pinewood Studios west of London where the films were made. Asked to explain their enduring appeal, **Bernard Cribbins**, an actor with the "Carry On" gang, said: "They were nice, vulgar, harmless films." "Good old honest smut" as how the late actor **Kenneth Williams** once described them.

□

Charlton Heston received the Golden Medal of the City of Vienna from **Mayor Michael Häupl**. The actor was a guest at a festival in and around the Vienna CityHall commemorating the establishment of the Second Austrian Republic in 1945. . . . The director **Steven Spielberg** received the John Huston Award for Artists Rights, for his efforts toward the protection of film art, at a gala in Beverly Hills.

Jacqueline Godany/Reuters

Charlton Heston honored in Vienna.

□

Jack Palance would rather be a funny man than a tough guy. "I'd always done the light roles, the comedic roles," the actor says of his early days in the business. "A friend said to me, 'Jack, you gotta expect people in New York are gonna laugh at you, so you better get used to it.' " Palance, 76, then made a career out of acting tough.

□

What is **Newt Gingrich to Patricia Ireland**? "The best membership recruiter NOW ever had," she claims. The president of the National Organization for Women lambasted the Republican speaker of the House with humor in a speech.

□

Jay Leno took his show on the road and ended up on the local morning news. "The Tonight Show" host popped into the KGW-TV studio in Portland, Oregon, chatted with the anchor and delivered a cup of coffee to the weatherman. The station was holding an auction to raise money for a children's hospital. Leno, in town to tape man-on-the-street segments, sweetened the deal with tickets and a backstage pass to his show.

□

Pope John Paul marked the first anniversary of surgery on a broken leg with a visit to Trento in northern Italy near the Austrian border.